1: Nadel E-5 (1934-1936) 1942
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in the dry season will sell for 1*s.* 4*d.* in the rains. In these two busiest months of the year, then, the profits of the blacksmiths may be as much as 7*d.* on every hoe, or over 1*s.* a day (one man can produce two hoes a day). The blacksmiths of the *Dokodza* group in Bida seem very satisfied with their economic situation. But the blacksmiths in the country, and also the blacksmiths of the other, smaller, guild sections in Bida, are bitterly complaining of the decline of native blacksmith trade. Some of these country blacksmiths have turned farmers, or have at least taken up farming on a larger scale than formerly, in order to balance the losses of their industry. This retrograde movement is due to a variety of causes. One which has affected all blacksmith groups in the country equally, is the competition of European trade. Thus the Nupe blacksmiths have lost almost their entire trade in bush-knives to the European trading-stores; nor does the once very extensive trade in Bida hoes which the Hausa caravans used to take north exist any more. The iron smelters have suffered most severely under this competition. As we have seen, their work has been almost completely disorganized under the pressure of European competition. Other causes affect the blacksmiths in the country more than in the town, and smaller groups more than larger. The scarcity of money among the peasants has forced certain farmers in Kutigi, for example, who were unable to pay in money for the hoes which they needed, to offer a half-day's work on the farms of the blacksmiths in lieu of payment.[1] Closer intercourse and the increased facilities of transport between town and country have also deflected some of the former custom of the village blacksmiths to Bida, where, owing to the presence of the European trading-stores, there is less danger of a shortage of raw iron occurring in the busiest time of the year. A final, more subtle, cause of the decline in blacksmith trade, which attacks smaller groups more severely than larger, lies in the failure of the former to meet successfully the demands of what we have called 'maintenance of labour'. This influence will become clear when we examine the second aspect of co-operation in native industries, namely, the co-operative organization of the professional group at large.

Guild Organization

The term 'guild' is applied correctly only to the Bida blacksmiths, whose organization shows the characteristic features of the guild system —the closed profession, centralized control, the hierarchy of ranks and grades. However, the individual blacksmith groups in Nupe, in Bida as well as in the villages, are all modelled on very similar lines—although the guild sections in Bida are organized on a larger scale, and also more closely and efficiently. Moreover, the control of the Bida guild system extends in certain respects over the whole country and the various independent local blacksmith groups. This widest professional unit is the result of political rather than economic factors; it is expressed mainly in

[1] Prices in the country are higher than in Bida. In Kutigi a heavy hoe is sold for 1*s.* to 1*s.* 6*d.* The difference in price seems chiefly due to the fact that the Kutigi blacksmiths must obtain their iron through middlemen who bring it from Bida, as there is no European store in the village.

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Ilorin, Oshogbo, or Ibadan. Another method is that the wholesale trader who buys up the smoked fish at the local riverside markets also trades them directly to Bida, Ilorin, &c.; certain enterprising traders with plenty of capital may also charter canoes and, travelling from place to place, buy up the local produce before it comes to the riverside markets.[1]

I have emphasized on various occasions the close correlation between markets and specialization of production. Here is the place to state the case once more. Generally speaking, trade and transport which bring the products of one area within reach of another involve competition, and through competition the elimination of inferior forms of production. Trade and transport must thus tend to foster (as they are in turn fostered by) local specialization. Certain developments in the agricultural and industrial production of Nupe reveal the effectiveness of these influences also in that culture. The people of Jebba, for example, do not grow sugar-cane or onions on their land, although on a similar type of land in Rabá and Ogudu these crops are cultivated. They explain this situation as being due to the fact that they are farmers on a less extensive scale, spending much time on fishing and (formerly) hunting; they prefer to import onions and sugar-cane from these other places. For certain handicrafts our evidence is even more striking, for here competition owing to an expansion of trade has only comparatively recently replaced an indigenous craft by imports from another area. The women of Leaba formerly practised pottery; but when the regular canoe traffic, which used to stop farther down the river, was brought up to Leaba, and pots made in Jebba and Gbajibo reached Leaba market, the Leaba women gave up their craft; their own pots, they explained, were inferior in quality to the imported product, owing to the inferior potter's clay found locally.

In small villages no trade is done, and markets are deserted, on days other than market-days. In large villages the markets do a little trade—in food only—also on ordinary week-days. On the day after a market there is often quite considerable trade in goods which did not find a buyer the previous day. On market-day the people begin to arrive between 9 and 10 o'clock. The market is in full swing by noon, and from 1 to 3 is the busiest time. After 4 the attendance begins to scatter, and soon after that the traders remove their goods, and the market is left empty. Every kind of trade and craft is represented even in the smaller village markets. In the roofed booths which every market possesses the more valuable goods are displayed—products of native industries as well as European goods. Tailors and leather-workers work in open huts. In the open square framed by these booths and huts agricultural produce, food-stuffs of every kind, live stock, pots, and tools are offered for sale.

[1] Lately the wives of the fishermen have attempted to break down the 'relay system' and to dispense with the services of middlemen, having begun to market their fish directly in Ilorin and Ibadan. A place like Ogudu, on the road from the river to Ilorin, which formerly formed an important exchange place, has now lost this transit trade in fish. The chief of Ogudu, to whom I owe this information, remarked regretfully that the women have 'begun to understand' (lit. 'have seen light').